



HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 14

**Hindi in Post-1965
Tamil Nadu**

Thanjai Nalankilli

HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 14 Hindi in Post-1965 Tamil Nadu

edited by
Thanjai Nalankilli

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Numbers in parentheses indicate number of articles by the author in this volume.

Hindi Imposition Papers

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Even if you are reading these articles a hundred years from now, these articles will tell you the history of the development and evolution of India's Hindi imposition policies and opposition to it, starting from 1938 to 2019. This is part of Indian history. India's language problem is an ongoing problem. We do not know where all this will lead to and how this will end.

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Preface

The historic "Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation of 1965" did not end Hindi imposition over Tamil Nadu or other non-Hindi states of India. Hindi imposition, infiltration and propagation continue. Articles in this volume explore various Hindi activities in post-1965 Tamil Nadu.

(First Published: July 2019)

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1.

Do Not Allow Hindi in Tamil Nadu High Court (Madras High Court)

K.S. Kumaresan
Thanjai Nalankilli

It has been the longtime demand of the government of Tamil Nadu, lawyers of Tamilnadu and people of Tamil Nadu that Tamil also be the high court language along with English. Madras High Court is the highest court of the State of Tamil Nadu and Tamil is the official language of Tamil Nadu. People should be able file cases in Tamil, argue the cases in Tamil and get judgments in Tamil. Much has been written about it and our demand has been well documented. So we will not dwell on it in this article.

While the demand for Tamil in the Madras High Court is openly made, there has been a **sneak, underhanded attempt to bring Hindi into the Madras High Court**.

Following many request to allow Tamil in the Madras High Court, in 2007, when Justice A. P. Shah was chief justice of the Madras High Court, the court made a recommendation to make Tamil as language of the court, along with English and Hindi. It was rejected by the Supreme Court. (Times of India, January 3, 2013).

This article is not about the Supreme Court rejection; it may be discussed in another article. This article is asking why did Justice A. P. Shah's court **sneaked in the request to allow Hindi** also in the Madras High Court? Neither the people of Tamil Nadu nor the lawyers of Tamil Nadu nor the state government of Tamilnadu asked for Hindi usage in the Madras High Court. Then why this Justice Shah from northern India, most likely knowing Hindi, sneak in a request for Hindi also? This is unacceptable.

In the same way we demand Tamil in our high court, we should be vigilant that Hindi is not sneaked in along with Tamil. We do not have to pay a ransom or price of accepting Hindi also in our court in order to have Tamil in our high court; Tamil Nadu assembly had overwhelmingly voted for the two-language formula--Tamil and English-- and successive state governments had reiterated it.

We accept English in the court as a courtesy for those who do not know Tamil. There is no need for Hindi to make life easier for Hindi speakers wherever they go for work. No one else benefits from introducing Hindi in our high court.

Once Hindi is made a court language, it would be impossible to oust it. So we should make it clear that Hindi is not acceptable here. There is no need to let in strangers into our house when we open the doors for our mother to come in.

A related demand. All high court judges must be from the state and should know the state language. The current policy of appointing one or more high court judges from other states must be ended.

(First Published: February 2013)

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2.

Hindi Street Signboards in Madurai Removed (Tamil Nadu)

Thanjai Nalankilli

Our negative reaction to Hindi signs in Madurai street is a reaction to (1) Hindi politicians, who control the Indian government, imposing Hindi on non-Hindi states, (2) the arrogant attitude of many Hindi people who demand everyone learn Hindi while they themselves would not learn any other language except their mother tongue Hindi, and (3) the sense of entitlement on the part of Hindi people that they should be able to travel anywhere in India and get along with their mother tongue Hindi only.

We have no objection to Malayalam, Telugu or Kannada signs near Tamil Nadu's border with Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, respectively, as long as these states put Tamil signs on their side too.

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Background
2. District Collector's Justification
3. Are We Accepting Hindi Imperialism?
4. Are We Opposed to a Third Language on Street Signs? No!
5. Are We Opposed to Hindi on Street Signs? Yes!
6. Hindi Street Names Sends the Wrong Message
7. When Indian Government does not Use Tamil in its Offices in Tamilnadu, Why Should We Put Hindi Signs in Madurai?
8. Additional Information

ABBREVIATIONS

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

ATM - Automated Teller Machine

CBSE - Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE curriculum is used central government and in many private schools throughout India)

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

1. Background

Madurai City Corporation Commissioner announced on January 20, 2013 that four crore Rupees would be spent on putting Tamil-English-Hindi street name-boards (instead of the existing Tamil-English boards) in some major streets near the historical Meenakshi Amman Koil (Hindu temple) and the railway station for the benefit of tourists (1 crore = 10 million). This strokes Tamil sentiments in the wrong way because of the bitter history of Tamil Nadu and Hindi. Tamil people opposed Hindi imposition from the very

beginning going back to 1938, continuing up to today. Agitations peaked in 1965. The Tamilnadu Students Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation of 1965 is a major historical event in Tamil Nadu; over 60 unarmed civilians were shot and killed during the 20-days of agitation (January 25 to February 13, 1965). These Tamil martyrs were remembered every year and there is a Tamil Nadu State government built memorial in Chennai, the capital city of Tamilnadu. Detailed discussion of the 1965 agitation may be found in Volume 3.

The organization, Tamil Desa Pothuvudamai Katchi, organized a demonstration against it on January 25, 2013. The demonstration in Madurai City against Hindi street names was surely far smaller than that of 1965 but the demonstrators were equally sincere and energetic. Tamil Desa Pothuvudamai Katchi also sent letters to both Madurai City Commissioner (administrator of the city) and Madurai District Collector (administrator of the district) explaining their opposition to Hindi signs. A number of others from all parts of Tamil Nadu also expressed their opposition to the District Collector. Following these protests, the District Collector withdrew the order to install Hindi signs and issued the following statement: "Respecting sentiments of our Tamil brothers and sisters, I am ready to take back my words regarding issue of trilingual boards and use of Hindi in these boards....I am here to serve people of Tamil Nadu and not to promote my mother tongue." This ended the protests.

2. District Collector's Justification

Madurai District Collector said that the Hindi street signs were installed to attract and help Hindi tourists. What about Malayalam, Telugu, Bengali tourists? What about Japanese, German tourists? If all these language groups come although we do not have street signs in their languages, Hindi people can come too. Why special privilege to Hindi people? Are they superior to all other Indians?

What Hindi people want is "one-language policy" for them (Hindi only) and "three-languages policy" for all others (state language, Hindi, English). We are not going to accept such a superior status for Hindi people. They are equal to the non-Hindi peoples, not superior to them.

3. Are We Accepting Hindi Imperialism?

Adding Hindi to street signs in Tamil Nadu is acceptance of Hindi imperialism, acceptance of Hindi supremacy, acceptance of language inequality and acceptance of Hindi apartheid. Our opposition to Hindi street signs should not be viewed in isolation. It should be viewed within the context of Indian government's Hindi imposition policy and actions. This will become evident as you read the following sections.

4. Are We Opposed to a Third Language on Street Signs? No!

We are not opposed to Malayalam street names near Tamil Nadu's border with Malayalam speaking Kerala, provided they put Tamil street names on their side too.

Reciprocity. This may benefit occasional cross border travel of people from both sides. The same with our borders with Telugu speaking Andhra Pradesh and Kannada speaking Karnataka. However we are opposed to Hindi signs because of reasons discussed in the following sections.

5. Are We Opposed to Hindi on Street Signs? Yes!

Why are we opposed to Hindi signs? It has nothing to do with the language Hindi but it has to do with the Hindi-imposition actions of Hindi politicians. It has to do with the arrogance of many Hindi visitors to non-Hindi states who expect everyone in India to know their mother tongue Hindi. They come a thousand miles from their home state and want us to communicate with them in their language.

Most Hindi people also have a sense of special entitlement that they should be able to go anywhere in India and do every thing using Hindi. They do not want to use any other language including English (India's second official language) because Hindi is India's *rashtrabhasha* (means either official language or national language). By adding Hindi in street names we are enabling this arrogant sense of entitlement.

Indian government is a major enabler by using Hindi everywhere in their offices, banks, railways, airports, etc. While Tamil people cannot use Tamil in most Indian government bank ATMs in Tamil Nadu where their ancestors have lived thousands of years, Hindi people can travel a thousand miles from their homeland and use their mother tongue Hindi. So why are we aiding Hindi imperialism by adding Hindi to street names in our cities. Let them learn how to read Tamil or English.

6. Hindi Street Names Sends the Wrong Message

Hindi people do not know the depth of opposition to Hindi imposition in Tamil Nadu. Text books used in their states as well as CBSE text books represent anti-Hindi imposition protests as "political drama" by politicians and not people's movement. The fact that 63 unarmed Tamil protesters were killed in army/police shootings and 7 Tamils self-immolated themselves (burnt themselves to death) in 1965 are not mentioned in these school text books (Chapter 4: Volume 3). Adding Hindi to street name boards sends the wrong message to Hindi people that Tamil people have accepted Hindi and are using Hindi. They take this message to their home states. Next time they read about opposition to Hindi imposition in any non-Hindi state, they laugh it off as some politicians trying to incite people against Hindi.

Also, since they see Hindi street names, they expect store keepers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, hotel employees, restaurant employees and everyone in non-Hindi states to talk to them in Hindi. If the state government can put Hindi signs, why do not these people talk to us in Hindi? This puts pressure on store keepers, bus drivers, etc. to learn Hindi, an unnecessary hardship. In a way this helps Indian government agenda that every Indian should know Hindi. Tamil Nadu opposes Hindi imposition, Hindi imperialism, Hindi

supremacy and language inequality. Remove Hindi from street signs. Tamil and English are enough.

7. When Indian Government does not Use Tamil in its Offices in Tamilnadu, Why Should We Put Hindi Signs in Madurai?

There are some "broadminded" individuals, some Tamils and many Hindis, who ask, "What is wrong with Hindi street signs in Madurai? As we explained in earlier sections, our opposition is a reaction to India's Hindi imposition policies.

We ask these broadminded people to ask the Hindi politicians to enact necessary laws asking Indian government to communicate with Tamil people within Tamil Nadu in Tamil. And then ask us to put Hindi street signs in Hindi for the benefit of Hindi speakers visiting us for a few days from a thousand mile away. Will Hindi street names be posted in Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, ... in Hindi states? If that is too many languages why a special privilege for Hindi? Let Hindi people learn to read English names as others do.

Indian Government supplies cooking gas cylinders to Tamil Nadu. Safety instructions (warnings) are in Hindi and English only; no Tamil (Chapter 3: Volume 10). So the Indian government expects Tamils living in Tamil Nadu to read and understand Hindi or English for their day-to-day living (cooking at home). Yet these broadminded people wants us to put Hindi street signs to benefit Hindis visiting Madurai for a few days. I say to these broadminded people, first tell the Indian government to put Tamil warnings in gas cylinders supplied to Tamil Nadu, and then ask us to put Hindi street signs in Madurai.

Go to any Indian government website. All information in most of these sites are in English and Hindi only; no other languages. So if a Tamil want to find some information from these sites (for example, booking rail ticket or availability of student scholarship or information on agriculture), the Tamil speaker is expected to know English or Hindi. But a Hindi speakers can get that information in their mother tongue. Are Hindi people paying higher taxes for this privilege? No. I say to these broadminded people, first tell the Indian government to publish web sites in all Indian languages, and then ask us to put Hindi street signs in Madurai.

There is a sign at Chennai Airport (Tamilnadu) telling employees "We feel happy when you speak in Hindi." Who is happy when Indian government employees in Tamil Nadu speak Hindi? They do not want Tamil employees at a Tamil Nadu airport to speak in Tamil even among themselves. It would make them unhappy.

A Parliamentary Sub-Committee Meeting was held in Mysore (Karnataka State) on July 5, 2008 to review the "implementation" of Hindi as per the official language policy. There was a large board written in Kannada. It says, "Maneya Vyavahara Kannadadalli, Karyalayada Vyavahara Raajabhasheyalli (Hindi)". It means, "Use Kannada at home, use Rajabhasha (Hindi) in office". Don't you think it is an insult to Kannada and all non-Hindi languages of India? They want us to limit our mother tongues within our homes.

Removing Hindi signs from streets is a reaction to such arrogance of Hindi politicians and many Hindi people. Let them learn Tamil or English or come with a Travelers Dictionary when they visit Tamil Nadu.

8. Additional Information

Installing Hindi street names in Madurai is a violation of Tamil Nadu State Two-Language Policy. Background and history of the two-language formula is explained in some detail in a companion article published in 2017 about Hindi in bus schedules at Kanyakumari Express Bus Stand (Chapter 3). That article also explains the need to post Tamil Nadu officers in Tamil Nadu (not officers from other states).

(First Published: March 2013; Updated: September 2017)

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3. Remove Hindi from Kanyakumari State Express Bus Station (2017)

Thanjai Nalankilli

Who is so blatantly violating Tamil Nadu State Government's two-language policy? Why we oppose Hindi in state government enterprises?

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. The Problem
2. Opposition to Hindi in Tamil Nadu (Background and Brief History)
3. The Two-Language Formula (The Two-Language Policy)
4. The Madurai City Incidence of 2013
5. Post Tamil Nadu Officers in Tamil Nadu
6. Solution to the Problem

ABBREVIATIONS

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

IAS - Indian Administrative Services

1. The Problem

Destination names of the bus routes at the State Express Bus Schedule at the Kanya Kumari Bus Station are written in Tamil (the state language), English and Hindi (2017). Why is Hindi there? Who ordered the inclusion of Hindi? Who ordered this violation of the two-language policy enacted by the elected government of the State of Tamil Nadu?

The State Express Service and the bus station are operated by State Express Transport Corporation (T.N. Limited) that is owned and operated by Tamil Nadu State Government. It has to be operated within the laws of the state government.

2. Opposition to Hindi in Tamil Nadu (Background and Brief History)

We are certain that neither Tamil Nadu chief minister nor the transportation minister ordered the inclusion of Hindi. It must be some middle level officer in the service of Tamil Nadu government.

This officer may be from Tamil Nadu or one of the large number of officers from other states who do not know the history of Hindi agitations in Tamil Nadu starting from the first day Hindi imposition started in Tamil Nadu in 1938 [Volume 3]. Hindi imposition went into high gear once the British left India and power went into the hands of Hindi politicians. Opposition to Hindi imposition peaked in January-February 1965 which was

brutally suppressed resulting the police, out-of-state police, central police and army shooting deaths of 63 unarmed protesters [Volume 3]. That led to the utter defeat of the ruling Congress Party in the 1967 legislative assembly election. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) which stood against Hindi imposition received a majority in the election and formed state government under chief minister C. N. Annadurai.

There was nothing that a state government can do about Hindi imposition in Indian (central) government offices and its undertakings like government banks, railways, etc. So the chief minister, who had spent much time in jail for participating in anti-Hindi agitations and demonstrations, ordered the removal of Hindi in all state government affairs. On January 23, 1968 Tamil Nadu government dropped the three-language formula (Tamil, English, Hindi) and adopted the two-language formula (Tamil and English).

3. The Two-Language Formula (The Two-Language Policy)

The two-language policy (state language and English) is a reasonable solution for any state; state language for those who live and/or work in the state and English for those on a short visit. It is the duty of those who live/work in the state to learn the state language and it is the responsibility for visitors to know the state language or English, or come with a little travelers dictionary or come with someone who knows the state language or English. This is what non-Hindi people going to work, live and/or visit Hindi states. Why a special privilege for Hindi people that they can go anywhere in India knowing only their mother tongue (one-language formula for Hindi people!) We do not see any need for Hindi in non-Hindi state affairs.

The two-language policy introduced by the DMK government of C. N. Annadurai in 1968 was accepted and followed by every Tamil Nadu government that came after (DMK and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) governments under chief ministers Karunanidhi (DMK), M. G. Ramachandran (AIADMK), Jayalalithaa Jeyaram (AIADMK), O. Panneerselvam (AIADMK) and the current AIADMK government of Edappadi K Palaniswami. So who is including Hindi in the state express bus schedule in Kanyakumari?

4. The Madurai City Incidence of 2013

There was one incidence of Hindi use by state government in the past. Madurai City Corporation Commissioner (an IAS officer from Hindi region) ordered in 2013 that name boards in major streets of Madurai City include Hindi. Opposition to the use of Hindi mounted. Tamil Desa Pothuvudamai Katchi took the lead and organized a demonstration against it on January 25, 2013. The commissioner heard Tamil people's message and withdrew his order "respecting sentiments of our Tamil brothers and sisters". The commissioner is a honourable man. He made a mistake and corrected it when it was brought to his attention [Chapter 2 of this Volume].

5. Post Tamil Nadu Officers in Tamil Nadu

The problem is not with the individual officers but with the Indian government policy of posting out-of-state officers who do not know the culture and history of the people whom they come to serve. This writer had always opposed this policy, and Tamil people and politicians should oppose it vehemently.

6. Solution to the Problem

I doubt the chief minister and transportation minister know of these Hindi signs in Kanyakumari; they have more important things to do. They expect that state government officials would follow state government policies.

I request people in large numbers to write or call the chief minister's office and transportation minister's office and inform them of the violation of the two-language policy. They will do the right thing. Their party (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagam - AIADMK) is after all named after the Annadurai ("Anna" for short) who introduced the "no-Hindi" two-language policy to Tamil Nadu.

Several questions relating to Hindi at Tamil Nadu State agencies are discussed in Chapter 2 of this Volume. That article discusses, among other things, why we oppose Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu Government enterprises but do not oppose Malayalam or Bengali, ... or any other Indian language. When Indian Government does not use Tamil in its offices in Tamil Nadu, why should Tamil Nadu Government put Hindi signs in its offices?

(First Published: September 2017)

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4.

A Hindi Chauvinist Comes Calling for Votes In Tamil Nadu

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Introduction
2. Meira Kumar Ruled Against Tamil in Parliament
3. Meira Kumar Called Hindi the National Language
4. Choice Between Two Hindi Chauvinists

ABBREVIATIONS

BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party

NDA - National Democratic Alliance

UPA - United Progressive Alliance

1. Introduction

The Congress Party led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) candidate in the 2017 election for President of India, Ms. Meira Kumar, came to Chennai, Tamil Nadu in June 2017, asking for the support of some Tamil Nadu political parties. What is her past relationship with the people of Tamil Nadu? The information we present below did not appear in any mainstream news papers or television at this time but we want to bring out her past Hindi chauvinist stands (all information culled from past mainstream news reports).

2. Meira Kumar Ruled Against Tamil in Parliament

M. K. Alagiri from Tamil Nadu became India's Chemicals and Fertilizers minister in 2009. He does not know Hindi and his English proficiency is limited. So he asked the Speaker of the Parliament (none other than Ms. Meira Kumar) permission to speak in Tamil in parliament. After delaying a decision for about 10 months, she ruled against ministers speaking in any language other than the two official languages of India (Hindi and English). She said that it would be unconstitutional. She ruled that Mr. Alagiri may read a prepared answer in English to the primary question and secondary questions may be answered by his deputy minister [The Hindu newspaper: July 18, 2010].

We want to point out that members of parliament (MPs) may speak in languages other than Hindi and English if they give advance notice to the speaker. Even that courtesy was not extended to the minister.

Was it in fact unconstitutional to speak in any language other than the two official languages Hindi and English? After the 2014 election, the new minister of external affairs

(foreign minister) and the minister of water resources took their oath in Sanskrit [New York Times: June 17, 2014]. Sanskrit is not an official language of India; it has the same status as Tamil in the constitution. If there is no constitutional impediment to ministers using Sanskrit in parliament and then there should be no restriction on ministers speaking in their mother tongue.

Ms. Meira Kumar owes an explanation or apology for her ruling against Tamil.

3. Meira Kumar Called Hindi the National Language

On August 13, 2010, Speaker of Parliament Ms. Meira Kumar referred to Hindi as the national language of India [Thina Thanthi (Tamil): August 14, 2010]. Nowhere does the Indian constitution specify Hindi as the national language. India does not have a national language. If anyone has any doubt, just about seven months before Ms. Kumar's false claim, Gujarat High Court ruled that Hindi is not India's national language [Times of India: January 25, 2010].

Ms. Meira Kumar's knowledge of Indian constitution is lacking or she makes up things to support her pro-Hindi mindset. Neither is a good attribute for the President of India. To be fair, the current President, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, although a non-Hindi (a Bengali), had taken pro-Hindi stance too. He said, "... in our constitution, Hindi has been given the status of national language" at the 2012 Hindi Day (Hindi Diwas). [Yahoo News: September 14, 2012]. Mr. Mukherji's subservience to Hindi is no secret. He said, "If you don't know Hindi, you cannot be a prime minister (of India)" [India Today: May 15, 2009].

4. Choice Between Two Hindi Chauvinists

Tamil people, or non-Hindi peoples in general, have no real choice because her opponent, the BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate Ram Nath Kovind belongs to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which is wedded to Hindi imposition and Hindi supremacy. Non-Hindi people have to choose between two pro-Hindi-imposition candidates. In fact, when it comes to Hindi imposition and Hindi imperialism, non-Hindi people have no choice. No government can be formed at the centre in India without the participation or support of a Hindi-centric party (Congress or Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)). They will impose Hindi equally; only difference is that Congress would do it quietly and BJP would do it openly with a drum beat.

Hindi imposition and the slow but steady side-lining of other Indian languages cannot be stopped in India. The only way to get out of Hindi imperial rule is to get out of India--that is creation of one or more countries without the Hindi states. That is the only way for non-Hindi peoples to escape Hindi imposition and imperialism.

(First Published: July 2017)

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5.

Fact Check: Do Tamil Nadu Students Love to Learn Hindi?

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Increase in Hindi Learners
2. The Reason Why?
3. Lessons from Pondicherry and Goa
4. A Challenge to Indian Government

1. Increase in Hindi Learners

Some Hindi chauvinists go around saying that Tamil Nadu students love to learn Hindi and it is only some politicians who oppose Hindi as the official language of India. These people who chewed their empty mouths found something to chew on in recent news.

Deccan Chronicles reported on August 4, 2018 that Tamil Nadu tops among the southern states in the enrolment of Hindi learners at the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha (DBHPS). We should analyze the reasons for the large enrolment. Is it the love for Hindi or something else?

More students in Tamil Nadu learn Hindi through Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha (DBHPS) compared to the other 4 southern states because most Tamil Nadu schools do not teach Hindi while schools in other southern states do.

2. The Reason Why?

Some try to conclude from the enrollment that Tamil people love Hindi. No. We do not love Hindi more than we love the languages Telugu or Bengali or German. Only reason these students study Hindi was that Indian government makes it more and more difficult to hold and rise in Indian government jobs without a knowledge of Hindi. Only a small fraction of students would seek or get Indian government jobs. For the vast majority of others working for the state government or private companies better proficiency in English is more beneficial. Yet some students study Hindi in case they get Indian government jobs. It has nothing to do with love for Hindi.

[Occasionally someone, who knows of my opposition to Hindi imposition, would ask me, "Is it wrong for me to study Hindi?" My answer is always something like, "If you think it would help you with Indian government jobs, study Hindi. We want non-Hindi people to go ahead in life. Study Hindi if it is necessary but do remember that Hindi is imposed on us. Do every thing you can to end Hindi imposition in whatever way you can."]

3. Lessons from Pondicherry and Goa

People in Pondicherry (India) studied French when it was under French colonial rule. Once it ended, very few study French there. People of Goa (India) studied Portuguese when it was under Portuguese colonial rule. Now, after the end of Portuguese colonial rule, very few in Goa study Portuguese. Suppose Indian constitution is amended that English would be the sole official language of India until all languages listed in the constitution become official languages. How many students would study Hindi in Tamil Nadu? None.

Circus elephants perform tricks because they are punished if they do not perform, and well fed only if they perform. Same thing here. We are forced by Hindi imposition to study Hindi. It has nothing to do with loving Hindi.

Inmates at Hitler's Nazi concentration camps did hard labour every day. Is it because they loved the Nazis? Is it because they loved to produce armaments for the Nazis? No. They worked because they would be starved or beaten to death if they do not do whatever their Nazi masters wanted.

4. A Challenge to Indian Government

I have a challenge to the Indian government. Hold a vote in Tamil Nadu on whether Hindi should be the official language of India or English should be the official language of India until it is practical to make all languages listed in the constitution to become official languages. If the majority of people vote for Hindi, I will stop my opposition to Hindi imposition, issue an open apology and learn Hindi myself. Will the Indian government accept this proposal?

(First Published: March 2019)

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6. Telegraph Service in Hindi and English Only

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 10 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Background
2. Indian Government, E-mails and Telegrams
3. How Hindi Ruled Supreme in Telegraph Services

1. Background

We are not talking here about the messenger service called "telegram" available on the Internet. We are discussing here the original telegram pre-dating Internet. Before e-mails became widely available, telegrams were the fastest way to send messages. Messages were sent through telegraph wires that networked around the world. In India, telegraph services were under the control of the Indian government like the Indian postal service. Every city and almost every town was wired and messages were sent instantly from on telegraph office to another, and then delivered to the recipient by a human messenger. Once e-mail became popular telegraph service became obsolete. So Indian government ended the telegraph services in 2013.

2. Indian Government, E-mails and Telegrams

This article discusses how the Indian government discriminated all Indian languages except Hindi in this vital communication tool in those days when telegraph was vital to businesses and individuals for sending urgent messages. In contrast, e-mails, successor to telegrams, is available in most Indian languages because e-mail is not under government control but privately offered and operated. Also look at social media like Facebook, Twitter and messenger. They are all privately operated and many Indian languages can be used. If these services were under Indian government control, you can be certain that Hindi would rule in these services and other languages would be sidelined. **When Indian government has a monopoly to a useful or vital service and no competitive private services are available, it will use it to impose Hindi by making the service available in Hindi and English only and ignoring all other languages.** Telegraph services is an example from the past. Now we discuss what happened during the days of telegraph services.

3. How Hindi Ruled Supreme in Telegraph Services

Telegraphs were brought to India during the British colonial rule. English was the only language in which telegrams could be sent in India during the British rule. After the British rule ended and the Hindi-dominated Indian government was formed in 1947,

Hindi was also soon added but other Indian languages were ignored. Telegrams could be sent in English or Hindi only in Tamil Nadu and everywhere in India. That put those who do not know English or Hindi at a disadvantage. After decades of requests and pleas from Tamil leaders, Indian government finally agreed to facilitate Tamil telegrams in some telegraph centres in Tamilnadu from January 14, 1994. (A special thanks goes to Congress leader Mr. *Kumari Anandan who relentlessly worked to introduce Tamil telegrams. It is seldom that Congress leaders from Tamilnadu do something for Tamil. Kumari Anandan is one of the few exceptions.)

Even then, **only a limited number telegraph centres**, mostly in major cities and towns, had Tamil telegraph facilities. This is unfortunate because it was the smaller towns closer to rural areas that needed Tamil telegraphs the most because not many knew English in these areas. People who do not know English and know only Tamil do send telegrams. May be not as many as those who know English but they do send telegrams and those telegrams are sometimes very important to them. Once in our village a villager who knows only Tamil received a telegram in English. I had the unfortunate task of translating the telegram to this elderly gentleman. The telegram told of the untimely death of his son in an accident in the town he was working. His daughter-in-law might have asked someone to write the English telegram. I know many instances where the death of a father or mother in the village was telegraphed to the children in far away cities.

In 2005, Indian government closed down Tamil telegraph facilities in all or most of the telegraph centers in Tamil Nadu (while Hindi and English telegrams could be sent from any telegraph center in Tamilnadu). The Indian government stated that it was doing so because not many people are sending Tamil telegrams.

A few question beg to be asked. If the number of telegrams sent in Tamil is the criterion, how many telegrams are sent in Hindi from Tamil Nadu (other than those sent by Indian Government offices which are forced to send certain percentage of communications in Hindi)? If that number is small, why are Hindi telegraphic facilities in Tamil Nadu still operating in every telegraphic center in Tamil Nadu? Use the same yardstick used to shut down Tamil telegraphic facilities. We also want to point out that lack of Tamil telegrams inconveniences at least some people in Tamil Nadu who know only Tamil. There is no need for Hindi telegrams because those Hindi speakers living in Tamil Nadu know either English or Tamil. If not, they should. Why should a Hindi speaker from over a thousand miles be able to send Hindi telegrams from Tamil Nadu, even though a Tamil speaker cannot send a Tamil telegram from his own native Tamil Nadu?

A German can send a German telegram in Germany. A Thai can send a Thai telegram in Thailand. An Armenian can send an Armenian telegram in Armenia. A Tamil should be able to send a Tamil telegram in Tamil Nadu. [We are discussing what happened before privately operated e-mail services replaced Indian government operated telegraph services in 2013. How Indian government discriminated all non-Hindi languages in telegraph services should not be forgotten.]

(First Published: August 2006; Updated February 2018)

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7.

Hypocrisy of Hindi Chauvinist Politicians Visiting Tamil Nadu

Inia Pandian

OUTLINE

1. Say a Few Words in Tamil and Listen to the Thunderous Applause from Crowd
2. Indian Railways Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav Says Three Words in Tamil!
3. Indian President Pratibha Patil Praises Tamil!
4. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Says Couple of Sentences in Tamil!
5. Closure

1. Say a Few Words in Tamil and Listen to the Thunderous Applause from Crowd

North-Indian politicians, especially chauvinist Hindi politicians, coming to Tamil Nadu and addressing election rallies or public meetings have learned a little trick. They start their speech by saying "Vanakkam" (means "greetings" in Tamil). Their party volunteers and supporters in the crowd would immediately applaud loudly as if they have done something great for Tamil, Tamil Nadu and the Tamil people! The speaker would pause for the applause to fade out and then continue the speech in English (we have nothing against them speaking in English or their mother tongue, after all they do not know Tamil). Then they go back to New Delhi and continue to fund millions and millions of Rupees to develop Hindi (but, may be, dole out a small fraction for Tamil and other languages if they are in a "generous mood"). From New Delhi they also continue to impose Hindi through radio, television, central government approved schools, central government employment and whatever other means, in total disregard to all the opposition from Tamil people.

Here are some examples of this hypocritical drama. This is by no means a complete list.

2. Indian Railways Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav Says Three Words in Tamil!

On November 29, 2004, Indian Minister for Railways Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav (Lalu Prasad Yadav) was opening a Railway Call Center in Patna, and Road Transport, Highways and Shipping Minister Mr. T. R. Baalu was opening a Railway Call Centre in Bangalore. (The former is from the Hindi-belt region and belonged to the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD); latter is from Tamilnadu and belonged to the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). RJD and DMK were partners in the ruling coalition at the Indian Central Government at that time.)

Mr. Laloo Prasad placed a telephone call from Patna to Baalu and the conversation was put on public address system in Bangalore so the crowd there could hear it. Baalu greeted the Railways Minister in English saying, "Hello, Sir". Laloo Prasad Yadav replied in Tamil saying, "Vankkam, nallaa irukkeengkalaa?" (Greetings, how are you? (or, more

precisely,. are you well?)). Balu answered in Tamil, "Naan nallaa irukkiraen. Neengal eppadi irukkireerkal?" (I am well. How are you?) The rest of their brief conversation continued in English because Mr. Laloo Prasad had used up the few words he memorized for this conversation, which he knew was going to be played to the public. The Tamil daily *Thinathanthi* reported that everyone was pleasantly surprised at Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav's eagerness to speak in Tamil. Memorizing three words in Tamil means nothing; nothing but a little drama to entertain, may be even hoodwink, people. Let us see who this Yadav is and what his background is with respect to the official language issue.

Laloo Prasad Yadav is a Hindi chauvinist who, like most Hindi-belt politicians, wants Hindi to be the sole official language of India (in other words, everyone should learn Hindi; not a mere three words but a good working knowledge). If he is so eager about Tamil, would he end the discrimination of Tamils and other non-Hindi employees in Railways by forcing them to pass Hindi examinations? If all that takes is memorizing three words in a language, would the Railways Minister issue an order that anyone who could say three words in Hindi is deemed to be knowledgeable in Hindi and need not have to pass the required Hindi examinations. (At present those who do not pass Hindi examinations are threatened with loss of job; their annual pay increments are also withheld.) [Chapter 14 of Volume 5]. Will the Railways Minister rescind the order to use more Hindi at **Southern Railways offices** (which serves the non-Hindi speaking southern states)? [Chapter 16 of Volume 5]. What we need is tangible actions that eliminate Indian Government's discriminatory practices against non-Hindi peoples, not a Hindi minister saying three memorized Tamil words. That is nothing more than a stunt. What we want is real actions not stunts.

3. Indian President Pratibha Patil Praises Tamil!

At the invitation of the State Government of Tamil Nadu, India's President Pratibha Patil inaugurated the World Classical Tamil Conference in Coimbatore on June 23, 2010. She praised Tamil language, literature and grammar in her inaugural address and we do appreciate it. She said, "The history of the Tamils is our nation's pride." Thank you again. She further said, "The next generation of Tamils must anchor as well as equip themselves with knowledge of Tamil culture, literature and values". Very good advice, indeed.

While we appreciate Indian government ministers and even the president of India praising Tamil and say good thing during their visits to Tamilnadu, their actions go counter to their lip service.

At the very same time India's President Pratibha Patil is saying, "**the history of the Tamils is our nation's pride**", very few people outside Tamil Nadu, especially in north Indian states, know the history of Tamil Nadu. Indian history books prepared by Indian government agencies are centered on north Indian history with very few pages allotted to eastern or southern India. Even the Twenty Ninth All-India Conference of Dravidian Linguistics held in Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala State passed a resolution in 2002 urging the Government of India to give South India its rightful and legitimate

share in history books and to withdraw the new school syllabus prepared and published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Indian government celebrated the 150th anniversary of the north-Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 calling it India's First War of Independence, although south-India's Vellore Mutiny of 1806 precedes the Sepoy Mutiny by over half a century. Every student in the south had heard about north-India's Sepoy Mutiny but very few in the north have heard about Vellore Mutiny because it is not in history books prepared under Indian government agencies. In September 2010, Indian Government Ministry of Culture announced grants of Rupees 2 crore (20 million) each for research on 12 freedom fighters from north-Indian Sepoy Mutiny but no money to do research on south-Indian Vellore Mutiny or Tamil Nadu's Maruthu Pandiyars who rose against British rule. So Indian President Pratiba Patil saying, "the history of the Tamils is our nation's pride" is well and good but put your money where your mouth is.

"The next generation of Tamils must anchor as well as equip themselves with knowledge of Tamil culture, literature and values", said President Pratibha Patil. Again, the Indian government is not doing anything to encourage it. Indian Government's Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is opening schools in Tamilnadu where you can graduate without studying Tamil Nadu history or culture. Indian government would not allow Tamil as court language in Tamil Nadu's High Court (Madras High Court) in spite of repeated requests. Indian Government owned Air India refuses to make in-flight announcements in Tamil for flight starting or ending in Tamil Nadu or even for flights within Tamil Nadu. Drug companies (pharmaceutical companies) are ordered to include Hindi in drug labels but no Tamil. Indian government is making Tamil more and more useless in Tamilnadu. While we greatly appreciate President Pratibha Patil's advice to the next generation of Tamils to learn Tamil culture, literature and values, Indian government's actions are counterproductive in this regard.

4. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Says Couple of Sentences in Tamil!

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who belongs to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), visited Tamil Nadu State in August 2015. He started his speech at the launch of the National Handloom Day in Tamil Nadu in August 2015 with a couple of sentences in Tamil (written by someone else). The crowd applauded (The Hindu; August 8, 2015) as if he did something great for Tamil language. This friendly face towards Tamil disappeared just the next month during the Teachers Day Celebration; his true colours as a Hindi chauvinist showed. That colour is unveiled in some detail in Chapter 8.

5. Closure

Hindi politicians know that Tamil is dear to them. So North Indian politicians put on this drama of praising Tamil when they come to Tamil Nadu. This little, hypocritical drama is going on for years, be it the Indian president, prime minister, minister or powerful northern politician from different political parties. I am fed up with it! What about you?

(First Published: August 1999; Updated: October 2015)

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8.

Hindi-Tamil Hypocrisy of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Inia Pandian

OUTLINE

1. National Handloom Day Speech
2. The Two Faces of Prime Minister Modi (Teachers Day Celebration)
3. Examples of Removing Tamil from Indian Government Offices in Tamil Nadu
4. Continuing the Policy of the Previous Governments in Keeping Out Tamil from Indian Government Offices in Tamil Nadu
5. Final Words

[Although this article discusses Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hypocrisy on Hindi-Tamil, other Indian prime ministers and Hindi politicians, from across the political parties, have also displayed such hypocrisy on the language issue. Couple of Some names are provided later in the article.]

1. National Handloom Day Speech

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Tamil Nadu State in August 2015. He started his speech at the launch of the National Handloom Day with a couple of sentences in Tamil (obviously written by someone else). The crowd applauded (The Hindu; August 8, 2015) as if he did something great for Tamil language. If only the crowd knew of the full extent of what his Indian government is doing to keep Tamil language out of Indian government offices, they might have booed him.

2. The Two Faces of Prime Minister Modi (Teachers Day Celebration)

Prime Minister Modi spoke to students all over India on 2015 Teachers Day via a telecast available to all schools. He spoke in Hindi with no translation to state languages or even English. Most students in Tamil Nadu did not understand the Hindi speech. Some schools did not even bother to turn on the television because the speech was in Hindi (Times of India; September 5, 2015). Narendra Modi also had a televised interaction with a few students selected by his office on the Teachers Day. This was also telecast to all schools across India. K. Visalini from Tamilnadu asked him a question in English and he answered her in Hindi (although he can and had talked in English many times) with no English or other non-Hindi translation. (Deccan Chronicle; September 6, 2015) Mr. Modi's actions during these Teachers Day events show his true colours as a Hindi supremacist. His fake respect for Tamil at the National Handloom Day just the previous month does not fool most Tamil people.

3. Examples of Removing Tamil from Indian Government Offices in Tamil Nadu

State Bank of India deposit slips in Tamil Nadu were in English and Tamil before Mr. Modi became the Prime Minister of India. After he became the prime minister, it was changed to English and Hindi. Mr. Modi, don't pretend to respect Tamil by speaking a few sentences in Tamil when you are here, put back Tamil in bank deposit slips. Do you know how many people of Tamilnadu have to seek help from a third person to fill out these slips because they know only Tamil? Or, are you in some fantasy land where everyone knows Hindi or English? Something atrocious is happening after Mr. Narendra Modi became Prime Minister. Indian government is putting up boards and banners here and there in Tamil Nadu where complete Hindi sentences are written in Tamil script (letters). This is an insult to Tamil language and Tamil people. This is polluting Tamil with Hindi. This is like creating a mixed-breed language of Tamindi. Mr. Modi, remove these boards and banners immediately. You are spitting on the faces of Tamil people with these banners and boards.

4. Continuing the Policy of the Previous Governments in Keeping Out Tamil from Indian Government Offices in Tamil Nadu

To be fair to Prime Minister Modi, he was not the first to keep out Tamil from Indian government offices in Tamil Nadu. Previous Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) governments had also used only English and Hindi instructions, tickets, warnings, etc. in Tamil Nadu. Here are a few examples from 2015 (not a complete list). No Tamil in most Indian government run bank Automatic Teller Machines (ATM). No Tamil in most computer generated railway tickets (train tickets). No Tamil warnings in cooking gas cylinders. No Tamil in most railway reservation lists posted in Tamilnadu train stations. No Tamil on instruction boards put in trains running within Tamil Nadu.

Prime Minister Modi, first put back Tamil your government removed from Indian government offices. Then reverse what the previous governments did and give Tamil its due place in Indian government offices within Tamil Nadu Then, Mr. Modi, the entire Tamil Nadu will applaud you.

5. Final Words

Prime Minister Modi is not the first north Indian politician to say a few sentences while speaking in Tamil Nadu, then go back to his/her office in New Delhi and continue to ignore Tamil and impose Hindi. Such politicians include President Pratibha Patil and Railways Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav [Chapter 7 of this Volume].

(First Published: October 2015)

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9.

Indian Government's Broken Promises to Tamil Nadu on the Language Issue

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

1. Official Languages Commission (Official Languages Committee)
2. Flight Announcements in Tamil

Abbreviations

BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

NDA - National Democratic Alliance

UPA - United Progressive Alliance

1. Official Languages Commission (Official Languages Committee)

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee promised Tamil Nadu State Chief Minister Jayalalithaa Jeyaram in 1998 that the Indian government would form a commission to study the feasibility of making all languages in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution as official languages of India. He never fulfilled that promise.

His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lost the next election and the Congress Party came to power. It came to power in coalition with Tamilnadu's Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). The coalition was called United Progressive Alliance (UPA). Prior to the election, on May 27, 2004, UPA released its Common Minimum Programme (actions the UPA would take if it came to power). At the behest of DMK, one of the items in the Common Minimum Program was that the Indian government would set up a committee to examine the question of declaring all languages in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution as official languages. Almost 7 years have passed and UPA is still in power; yet there is no move to set up the promised committee.

(For the record, I think that making 20 or so languages as official languages is impractical. Our position is that English should be the sole official language until all languages in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution could become official languages, if at all possible. What is happening is no action is taken in this direction but the Indian government is thrusting more and more into unwilling Tamil throats. Many dozens of examples of recent Hindi imposition activities may be found in other chapters of this and other volumes)

2. Flight Announcements in Tamil

Indian government promised Tamil Nadu's Minister for Tamil Development Tamilkudimagan in the late 1990s that Indian government owned Indian Airlines would make announcements in Tamil in flights originating in Tamil Nadu or coming to Tamil Nadu. Years passed by but the promise was never fulfilled. All that the Indian Airlines had to do is have at least one Tamil knowing attendant in every flight originating in Tamil Nadu or coming to Tamil Nadu. If some foreign airlines like Germany's Lufthansa can make Tamil announcements, why can't Indian Airlines? (Indian Airlines became part of Air India, and the Indian government owned Air India did not fulfill Indian government promise to make announcement in Tamil either.)

Again, in 2005, Indian government promised members of parliament belonging to Tamil Nadu's Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) that Indian Airlines would make announcements in Tamil in flights originating in Tamil Nadu or coming to Tamil Nadu. It is now 2011. That promise was also not fulfilled. No Tamil announcements; only English and Hindi.

While the Indian government fails to make Tamil announcements in flights originating in Tamil Nadu or coming to Tamil Nadu, it marches ahead in pushing Hindi through more and more avenues. Here is one example. Indian government issued an order to pharmaceutical companies (drug industry) that all pharmaceutical labeling should include Hindi from April 1, 2006. That is, pharmaceutical products (drugs) sold in Tamilnadu would be labeled in English and Hindi but no Tamil. Tamil has no place in drug labels or flights in Tamil Nadu although most customers are Tamils.

(First Published: April 2011)

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10. My Grandson wore a Black Flag!

K. A. Murugesu Swamy

I was a student during the 1965 anti-Hindi imposition agitation in Tamil Nadu that started on January 25 of that year. The mass upheaval of the Tamil people against Hindi imposition and the government crushing it with brute force (shooting and killing more than 60 unarmed civilians and injuring many more) made a great impression on my psyche.

Ever since 1965, I wear a small black flag or black ribbon on my shirt pocket on January 25. I am doing this for over 30 years, and I will do so this year and years to come.

Last January I was visiting my daughter in the United States of America. Seeing me wear a black flag on January 25, my grandson wanted to wear one too. I gave my flag to him and explained to him what it signified. When his little friends asked him what it was all about, he told them "I am a Tamil from India. I am honoring all those Tamils who were shot and killed during the anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation."

(First Published: January 1999)

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11. Postage Stamp in Honour of the 1965 Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation Martyrs of Tamil Nadu

Inia Pandian

In October 2004, Jana Naayaka Munnetra Kazhagam passed a resolution urging the Indian Government to issue a postage stamp in honor of the 1965 Tamil martyrs who self-immolated themselves to express their opposition to Hindi becoming the official language of India. The meeting was presided by the Kazhagam President Dr. S. Jagatratchakan. We applaud Jana Naayaka Munnetra Kazhagam for the resolution. Jana Naayaka Munnetra Kazhagam's resolution is also timely because it was passed just a few months before the 40-th anniversary of the agitation.

We do not think that the Indian Government would ever issue a postage stamp in honor of these martyrs who laid down their lives in opposition of making Hindi the official language of India. But Jana Naayaka Munnetra Kazhagam's resolution reflects our own feeling that these martyrs as well as those who were shot and killed or injured during the 1965 Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation should be honored, if not by the Indian Government, then by the Tamilnadu State Government. How about a large memorial statue **next to the Statue of Labour in Chennai Marina**? May be, **another one in Kanyakumari on a rock**? Such conspicuous memorials would tell tourists of Tamil people's opposition to Hindi becoming the official language of India and of the sacrifices made by Tamil martyrs. (We know that there is a memorial in Chennai but it is not at a prominent place; very few people know of it. That is why we mention the two locations visited by large numbers of tourists.)

Detailed information on Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitations in Tamil Nadu may be found in Volume 3.

(First Published: February 2005)

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12. Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitations: What is in a Name?

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 3 also because of its relevance there.]

1. Introduction

The first demonstration/agitation against Hindi imposition took place on January 3, 1938 in Madras Province (much of Madras Province became Tamil Nadu State). There were several demonstrations against Hindi imposition over the years. They peaked in January-February 1965 with the Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation [See Chapter 1].

Until the 1980s or so, these agitations were called Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitations or Anti-Hindi Agitations (for short); the word Hindi was invariably there to identify that these protests were against Indian government's Hindi imposition policies. Then all of a sudden, "some people" started calling these agitations as "Language Agitations". We do not know who started this change. Even the 1965 Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitation was called 1965 Language Agitation. In 1965, everyone called it Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation or Anti-Hindi Agitation; no one called it Language Agitation.

We are opposed to the change in name. We ask everyone to call those agitations what they were -- agitations against Hindi-imposition. Why? The term "Language Agitation" is so vague, it does not tell what the agitations and sacrifices by the great Tamil martyrs were. Meaning of the name "Anti-Hindi Imposition Agitation", on the other hand, is crystal clear.

Some people say "Anti-Hindi Agitation" means Tamils are against Hindi language. No, we have nothing against the Hindi language or any language. Most Tamils have not even heard the name Hindi before 1937 when plans to make Hindi a subject in schools was announced. "Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitation" is the correct term. The very first time when the agitations are mentioned in an article, they should be referred as "Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitations". One may use the shorter version "Anti-Hindi Imposition" after that in the article. If you are very particular about it, use "Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitations" every time. But do not call them "Language Agitations".

2. Why We Oppose the Name Change?

There are two reasons why we want to retain the name "Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitations" and avoid "Language Agitations".

2.1 Reason 1

As we already mentioned, the term "Language Agitation" is so vague, it does not tell what the agitations and sacrifices were about. Meaning of the name "Anti-Hindi

Imposition Agitation", on the other hand, is crystal clear. Leaders like Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy and C. N. Annadurai who organized many of these protests never called them Language Agitations. Keep the name they used -- Anti-Hindi-Imposition Agitations.

2.2 Reason 2

The second reason. Some powerful Hindi politicians are going around claiming that Tamil people and even some stalwart Tamil leaders did not oppose Hindi imposition. If we call these agitations "Language Agitations", these Hindi politicians would claim that these agitations were against English use and not against Hindi imposition. Future generations would believe these lies and not know the real history.

Here are two examples of how powerful Hindi politicians are denying and hiding the history of our opposition to Hindi imposition.

2.2.1 Example 1

Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) General-Secretary C. N. Annadurai was a stalwart against Hindi imposition. Yet there are attempts by a Hindi politician to hide and distort it. Speaking in Chennai in September 1998 at the birth anniversary of Annadurai, the then Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee (a Hindi politician) said that Annadurai was not anti-Hindi and his views on the language policy need to be understood in a proper perspective (Express News Service; September 16, 1998). This is telling half-truths and hiding facts to distort history. No Tamil is anti-Hindi. Let Hindi live and prosper in Hindi lands. We do not want it imposed on us. Annadurai's views about Hindi imposition are detailed in another volume of this series. He organized anti-Hindi imposition conferences, demonstrated against it including attempts to burn language-related parts of the Indian constitution, and was imprisoned many times for his activities against Hindi imposition.

2.2.2 Example 2

In February 2000 Prime Minister Vajpayee uttered yet another falsity about Tamil Nadu's opposition to Hindi imposition. He said, "If Hindi were announced the official language of India immediately after the British left, there would have been no opposition to Hindi". The fact of the matter is, people of Tamil Nadu opposed Hindi becoming the official language of India even before the British left India on August 15, 1947. There was a demonstration against making Hindi a compulsory subject in Tamil Nadu (Madras Province) on January 3, 1938. There were more protests on February 27, April 21, May 28, June 3, August 1 and September 10, 1938. Protests continued in the ensuing years: 1939, 1940, 1942 and 1946. British left India in 1947. There were protests against Hindi imposition in 1947 and later years too. [See Chapter 1]

If we call the Anti-Hindi (Imposition) Agitations as Language Agitations, people like Vajpayee would surely say years from now that those agitations were not against Hindi imposition but were against English use.

(First Published: January 2019)

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13. **Hindi in Neyveli Lignite Corporation**

N. P. K. Nedumaran

[This chapter is included in Volume 5 also because of its relevance there.]

In March 2008, Managing Director of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) reported that 40% of the official communication in the corporation is carried out in Hindi and hoped to meet the target of 55% as set forth by the Indian Government. (Neyveli Lignite Corporation, located in Neyveli, Tamil Nadu, is an Indian Government undertaking and it has to perform certain stipulated percentage of work in Hindi.)

We ask those Tamilnadu politicians who claim that there is no Hindi imposition: "Is it not Hindi imposition?" Forty percent of communications are written in Hindi means, Neyveli Lignite Corporation employees are compelled to write those correspondence in Hindi whether they want to or not. I work at NLC and I was told by my supervisor that I **MUST** write certain letters in Hindi (Neyveli Nedumaran is an assumed name to protect my employment). I know that almost all non-Hindi employees, if given a choice between Hindi and English, would write everything in English. We are compelled to work in Hindi. Even after passing the required Hindi examination (as I was compelled to do to receive annual salary increments), it is not easy to write in Hindi.

It takes more time and effort for me and other non-Hindi employees to write in Hindi compared to employees whose mother tongue is Hindi. Yet we are expected to do the same amount of work as Hindi speakers and how much work we do matters when it comes to salaries and promotions. If still we (non-Hindi employees) advance in Indian government undertakings, it is a testament to our extra hard work compared to Hindi speakers. Why can't we all do the work in English? All of us here have learned English in schools and college whether from Hindi states or non-Hindi states. In this global economy English is something we need. What is the need for Hindi other than it helps Hindi speakers?

We put up with this language discrimination silently because we need the job to feed our families. Is there any honourable politician left in Tamil Nadu to spearhead a movement to stop the forced use of Hindi in central government and public sector undertakings like Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Life Insurance Corporation, Indian Railways and Indian Government owned banks?

(First Published: July 2008)

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14.

Hindi on Chennai Television

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 10 also because of its relevance there.]

[Though we discuss Hindi in the Regional Channels in Chennai (Tamil Nadu), situation is the same in other non-Hindi regions too. This is yet another way of thrusting Hindi into non-Hindi regions.]

OUTLINE

1. Unpleasant Surprises
2. Arrogance of Hindi Power
3. Cable Television and Direct-to-Home Television
4. Concluding Remarks

1. Unpleasant Surprises

Television viewers in Chennai and vicinity had a rude surprise in late 2003. When they turned on their television sets to the Indian-Government operated Chennai regional Doordarshan channel (DD1) at 8:30 PM for the day's news in Tamil, there was someone reading the news in Hindi. Lo and behold the Hindi dominated Indian Government had decided that Hindi news should be broadcast at the choice hour of 8:30 PM and Tamil news should be moved to a later time in the night when many people have already gone to sleep. This makes no sense since this regional channel is seen only in Tamil Nadu where almost everyone knows Tamil and very few know Hindi. This is yet another testimony as to who rules India. It is Hindi politicians who are determined to thrust Hindi on non-Hindi peoples.

Chennai television viewers had yet another unpleasant surprise. When they turned on their Chennai regional channel (DD1) on Friday night to watch a Tamil movie and relax, there was a Hindi movie, although Tamil movie broadcasts are huge hits (popular) in Tamilnadu. Vast majority of viewers could not understand Hindi. Disappointed viewers hoped that they could catch a Tamil movie at least the next day (Saturday). After dinner they turn on to the regional channel (DD1) for the usual Tamil movie broadcast. To their utter dismay there was a Hindi movie again. What happened? Hindi dominated Indian Government had instructed the regional television center in Chennai to replace the Friday night and Saturday night Tamil movies with Hindi movies, leaving only Sunday nights for Tamil movies.

2. Arrogance of Hindi Power

Remember, in addition to the few regional channels, there are over a dozen Indian-Government operated national channels (national broadcasts) seen all over India that are

exclusively for Hindi or Hindi and English programmes. When regional channels were introduced (which could be seen in major cities and nearby areas only), people thought that at least in these channels local languages would dominate the programs. That was not to be. Hindi politicians made sure that Hindi programmes were also included in substantial numbers in these channels. We do not see the logic of why Hindi programmes should be included in a regional channel in Chennai which serves Tamil speakers, when there are already over a dozen national channels available in Tamil Nadu which show Hindi programs day and night, seven days a week (National channels do not have Tamil programs). This is nothing but arrogance and display of power by Hindi politicians to demonstrate it is THEIR country and Hindi will dominate in everything the Indian Government does.

One more point. Take a village in West Bengal (India) near the border of Bangladesh. If they turn on their television sets to Indian-Government operated television channels, they would not find anything in their mother tongue Bengali. However if they turn on to Bangladesh television they could watch a whole array of programs in Bengali.

3. Cable Television and Direct-to-Home Television

There are people who say that Tamil Nadu has Tamil programs in cable television channels; so why are you complaining about lack of Tamil programs on broadcast television (over-the-air television)? Cable channels cost money (monthly fees). Poorer segments of the population cannot afford the monthly cable fees. Also, cable television channels are not available in many rural areas. While Hindi speakers can get at least a dozen free Hindi programs (movies, sports, news, educational) any time of the day anywhere in India (even in remote areas), even outside the Hindi speaking states FOR FREE, why should Tamil people have to pay for cable television to watch Tamil programs in Tamil Nadu? Indian-Government operated television (Doordarshan) is subsidized by Tamil people's tax monies too.

Direct-to-Home (DTH) television through satellites will be available in India starting from 2004 or 2005. A few Tamil channels and Hindi channels will be available in Tamil Nadu through DTH. Though it does require a monthly fee, one has to buy the necessary satellite dish. Again, Tamil Nadu will receive far more Hindi programs than Tamil programs through DTH. Why? What is the reason?

4. Concluding Remarks

Our position is that there should be a variety of Tamil programs (movies, sports, news, educational) available in Tamil Nadu for FREE from Indian-Government operated television broadcasting. When we see that a Hindi speaker living in Tamil Nadu has substantially more choice of Hindi programs than Tamil; that is Hindi imperialism. **If India is for everyone living in India, then Indian Government funded projects should benefit everyone equally and should not disproportionately favor on group (here, Hindi speakers).** This is not the case in India and we have presented dozens of examples in the various chapters of this book.

NOTE: If sufficient pressure is brought on the Indian Government, it may relent and add a few more programs in Tamil in the regional channel. But when things cool down, it will start replacing Tamil programs by Hindi programs again. We have precedent to it. In the mid-1980s, Indian Government replaced the Tamil news by Hindi news at night and moved the Tamil news to a later time in the Chennai regional channel. The then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran phoned the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and told him that it was not acceptable and there would be grave consequences. His AIADMK party and other groups talked of an anti-Hindi agitation (AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam). Consequently Tamil news was put back in its original time slot. Then some years after Chief Minister Ramachandran's death, Indian Government again replaced the Tamil news by Hindi news and moved Tamil news to a later time. Number of hours of Hindi programs was also increased as if in retaliation. **That is the Indian Government tactic; back off and hit back later**, not only with respect to Hindi on television, but also on other discriminatory practices favoring Hindi speakers. So be ever vigilant!

(First Published: November 2004)

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15.

Hindi Advertisements in Non-Hindi Newspapers: Does it Make Sense?

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 10 also because of its relevance there.]

We published this article originally in February 2007 wondering the wisdom of Indian government placing Hindi advertisements in non-Hindi newspapers, even in Tamil newspapers most of whose readers do not know Hindi. Would it not serve the purpose better if the advertisements were in the same language as the newspaper? Things are getting crazier. More and more of our tax monies are going to be wasted on placing Hindi advertisements in non-Hindi newspapers. On June 30, 2017, Indian government issued an order asking all its ministries and departments to have a Hindi version of every advertisement that they release either in English or in a regional language. (Economic Times; July 21, 2017). Now go on and read the original article below.

Advertisements in Hindi appeared in some Tamil newspapers published and sold in Tamil Nadu in 2006. Why would any reasonable business place advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers in a state where very few people know Hindi?

Purpose of an advertisement is to tell consumers of a product or service, with the intent of influencing them to buy the product or service. So the advertisement should be in a language the consumer understands. So placing advertisements in Hindi in Tamil newspapers in Tamilnadu does not make any business sense. Will a Japanese car maker place a Japanese advertisement in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu? No, it would not. If the advertisement department were to place such an advertisement, the department manager would be dismissed for wasting company money. Yet a company placed Hindi advertisements in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu? What is this company?

The company that placed Hindi advertisements in Tamil newspapers in Tamil Nadu is the Southern Railways, owned and operated by the Indian Government.

Now it all makes sense and we understand the reason. **The purpose of those Hindi advertisements is not to tell readers about Southern Railways' services and induce them to travel more by train, the purpose is to throw Hindi at their faces.** The Hindi politicians who dominate and thus control the Indian Government are very unhappy that Tamil people oppose Hindi as India's official language and that Tamilnadu State controlled schools do not teach Hindi. So they are throwing Hindi at our faces through Hindi advertisements and other means (Hindi television programs, Hindi drug labels, etc.) Another purpose is to immerse Tamil people in Hindi until they choke in it.

All-India broadcasts of the Indian Government controlled free television (Doordharshan) are primarily Hindi 24 hours a day. You can see over a dozen Hindi programmes anywhere in India any time of the day. That is not all. Even Doordharsan regional channels within Tamil Nadu broadcast more Hindi movies than Tamil movies. **Does it**

make sense to broadcast more Hindi movies than Tamil movies in channels available only in Tamil Nadu? Television ratings consistently show that viewers prefer Tamil movies over Hindi movies by a huge margin. It makes more sense to broadcast Tamil movies in Tamilnadu. That would also bring in more advertisement revenues. But that is not what the Indian Government does. Why? To throw Hindi at Tamil people's faces and immerse them in Hindi. There is no other valid reason.

It is this kind of arrogant, single-minded, concerted efforts by the Indian Government to impose Hindi on Tamil Nadu by hook and by crook, directly and indirectly, overtly and covertly that is further building resentment among Tamil people. One day that resentment could burst like a fire breathing volcano.

UPDATE: Southern Railways (July 2012)

Indian Railways placed a Hindi advertisement again in the Tamil daily newspaper Thinathanthi on May 24, 2012; Thinathanthi has the largest number of readers among Tamil daily newspapers. This Hindi advertisement asks rail travelers not to carry inflammable articles in trains. A rough translation of this Hindi advertisement is as follows: "Small articles lead to big accidents. Please do not carry inflammable articles during your rail journey. Indian Railways --- Your safety ... Our aim." As we asked in 2007 when we published this article first, we ask again, what is the purpose of placing a Hindi advertisement in a Tamil language newspaper, very few of whose readers know Hindi? Will it not make sense to place advertisements in Tamil in a Tamil language newspaper published in Tamilnadu?

There is more to it than the waste of taxpayer money. **Tamil rail-passengers are not getting this useful safety message because it is in Hindi.** Is Indian Railways interested in the safety of Hindi speakers only? Would it not be better to publicize this safety message in Tamil in Tamil Nadu? In the name of establishing Hindi supremacy all over India, it is blacking out this useful safety message to non-Hindi speakers. People do get injured sometimes when inflammable materials like kerosene are carried in trains without proper safety precaution. There are people who are unaware that carrying inflammable materials like kerosene in trains is not a good idea. So this safety-related advertisement is an useful public service message. But because it is published in Hindi, people are not getting this useful message. Indian Railways' attitude seems to be, "Learn Hindi if you want to benefit from our safety messages." This is Hindi arrogance of the worst kind.

(First Published: February 2007; Updated August 2017)

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16. Why Hindi People Insist on and Tamil People Oppose Hindi Signs in Tamil Nadu?

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 10 also because of its relevance there.]

[Although this article concentrates on Tamil Nadu, the general discussion on opposition to Hindi signs is valid to all non-Hindi states.]

OUTLINE

Abbreviations

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6. Update: Opposition in Karnataka

ABBREVIATIONS

AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

DK - AIADMK - Dravidar Kazagam

DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

PMK - Paattaali Makkal Katchi

1. Introduction

Tamil people opposed Hindi signs at Indian (Central) Government offices in Tamil Nadu from the very beginning. Indian Government ordered the painting of Hindi signs, in addition to the existing English and Tamil signs, in all Indian Government offices and facilities in Tamil Nadu in 1952. Dravidar Kazhagam (DK) and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) spearheaded the opposition and carried out a "tarring campaign". DK President E. V. Ramaswamy Periyar (EVR) and DK volunteers tarred Hindi signs in Thiruchi (Trichi) on August 1, 1952. DMK General-Secretary C. N. Annadurai and DMK volunteers tarred Hindi signs in Coimbatore. Soon the Indian Government repainted the Hindi signs. There was no use in tarring them again and again. Signs would be repainted. Although Hindi signs were not tarred again and again, opposition to Hindi signs remains. More recently, in December 2004, Tamilnadu Chief Minister and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(AIADMK) General-Secretary Jayalalthaa wrote a letter to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asking him to remove the newly painted Hindi signs along national highways. Thank you Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.

More than once my Hindi friends had asked me, "Why do 'you people' (referring to Tamil people) oppose Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu?" The rest of this article is an elaboration of my answer to those friends.

2. Reasons in a Nutshell

There are three principal reasons:

- a) There is no practical need for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.
- b) Hindi signs are the emblems of Hindi supremacy, domination and hegemony over Tamil Nadu.
- c) Hindi signs are the most visible symbols of Hindi imposition on Tamil people. By opposing Hindi signs we are opposing the complete system of Hindi imposition that is doing great harm to Tamil people. "If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be treated like third rate citizens" - Former Tamilnadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai, speaking at a Public Meeting in Chennai Marina (Madras Marina) on April 29, 1963.

Let me elaborate on these points.

3. There is no practical need for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu

Hindi politicians and people insist that Hindi is known to more people in India than any other language and so Hindi signs should be everywhere in the Indian Union. People whose mother tongue is Hindi or one of its dialects is about 40% of Indian population. Many people in the north, even those whose mother tongue is Gujarati, Punjabi, Rajasthani or Bihari usually have a working knowledge of Hindi. That does not mean that there should be Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.

Is there a real benefit to putting Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu post offices, railway stations, national highways and Indian Government offices and undertakings (other than the pride and ego boost for Hindi people)? No benefit at all. Almost all Hindi belt people visiting Tamil Nadu know enough English at least to read English signs because English is taught in every school in India. These visitors need not have to know how to read, write or speak English sentences. All they need to know is English alphabet and how to read names written in English at railway stations or national highways. If the schools in Hindi states are so bad that people coming out with a fifth grade education cannot read names written in English, may be the state governments there should improve their schools at their own expense instead of painting Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu. Some proponents of Hindi may argue that there are people who never went up to the fifth grade. I seriously doubt that some Hindi person who never went up to the fifth grade would travel a thousand miles to see Tamil Nadu without someone who has at least that level of education accompanying him. I suggest that they do not. Tamil Nadu cannot cater to

every illiterate who visits Tamil Nadu. What about a Telugu person who cannot read English or Tamil visiting Tamil Nadu? Are we going to put Telugu signs all over Tamilnadu? What about a Bengali, and so on. What about a Tamil person who cannot read English or Hindi visiting the holy city of Benares in Hindi area or visiting the beautiful Agra in Hindi area? I have not seen any Tamil signs there. Why should Hindi people get a special superior status over others? Is everyone other than Hindi speakers second-class citizens of India? Is it India or Hindia?

[In a lighter vein, what about a Hindi person who is totally illiterate? (Cannot even read or write the mother tongue Hindi). There are many such people in the Hindi-belt because Hindi-belt states have a much lower literacy rate than most non-Hindi states. What about those people if they want to visit Tamil Nadu? Is the Indian Government going to employ people to stand near kilometer stones along national highways and at the entrance of railway stations to shout the name? This is said in light vein to show the impossibility of satisfying everybody's need. The people who visit Tamil Nadu, be they from nearby Kerala or far to the north Uttar Pradesh or far away Japan, have the responsibility to know enough Tamil or English to pass through Tamilnadu.]

4. Hindi Signs are the Emblems of Hindi Supremacy, Domination and Hegemony over Tamil Nadu

Hindi signs are the emblems of the domination and hegemony of Hindi people over Tamil Nadu. When Government of India ordered that Hindi signs be added at all its offices (including railway stations and post offices) in non-Hindi states, there already were English signs there (in addition to the local state language). Tamil and English signs are sufficient to serve all those who live in Tamil Nadu and visit Tamilnadu. Let me explain. Tamil signs for those who live in Tamil Nadu; it is the language of day-to-day living in Tamil Nadu (in the same way Bengali is in West Bengal, etc.) English signs for the benefit of those visiting us. We cannot post signs in the language of everyone who visit us. It is impractical to post signs in hundreds of languages. English has evolved as the international language (the language of communication and commerce between countries). English is taught in every country. We know that almost all who have a need to come to Tamilnadu (with the exception of those living just miles across the borders of Tamil Nadu in the neighboring states) know enough English to read signboards in English. By rare chance if someone who has not even that minimum level of English knowledge or Tamil were to come to Tamil Nadu for business or sightseeing or pilgrimage, it is his/her responsibility to come with a travelers dictionary, electronic translator or with someone who knows a minimum level of English or Tamil. No one expects to find signs in Tamil Nadu in Chinese, in German, in Vietnamese, in Nepalese, in Telugu or in Bengali ... Then why a special superior privilege for Hindi people?

Hindi politicians believe that they rule all of Indian Union and so there should be Hindi signs everywhere. When the Portuguese ruled Goa they put Portuguese signs all over Goa. When the French ruled Pondicherry they put French signs everywhere there. When the British ruled India they put English signs all over. (We put English signs now even after the end of British rule because it is NECESSARY for the benefit of those who

visit us, as discussed above.) Hindi people insist on Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu because they consider it part of their dominion. There is no practical reason for Hindi signs in Tamil Nadu.

Let me put it another way. For over a century, until the mid twentieth century, British, French and Portuguese ruled the Indian subcontinent. British ruled much of India. Signs in their language, English, were everywhere in British India. French ruled a small area including Pondicherry; there French signs were everywhere. Portuguese ruled Goa; there Portuguese signs were everywhere. British rule ended and Hindi dominated Indian rule came over the British India (except for Pakistan) in 1947. Within five years Hindi signs were placed throughout this area thus indicating Hindi hegemony over these areas. French rule ended in Pondicherry in 1954 and Pondicherry became part of India. Soon French signs were replaced by Hindi signs (there were no Hindi signs before). Then Portuguese rule over Goa ended in the 1961 and Goa became part of India. Soon Portuguese signs were replaced by Hindi signs. As we discussed before, there is no practical need for Hindi signs. **In essence they are painted as the emblem of Hindi domination over all of Indian Union.**

In a way it is like a dog lifting its leg and urinating on every kilometer stone or post it sees on its way to mark its territory. Nothing more. (Don't write me saying that I compared Hindi people to dogs. No, I did not. I am merely comparing the acting painting Hindi signs unnecessarily along national highways to the act of dogs urinating on posts and kilometer stones on its way.) Hindi people are merely marking their territory by putting Hindi signs all over their dominion.

Nowhere is it clearer than if you drive from West Bengal to the neighboring Bangladesh. Vast majority of people of West Bengal and Bangladesh are of the same race (ethnicity) and they both have the same mother tongue, Bengali. But West Bengal is a state of India and Bangladesh is an independent country. As you drive through West Bengal towards Bangladesh, you will see Hindi signs (along with Bengali and English) on the national highway but once you cross the border and enter Bangladesh you will not see any Hindi signs. Is there a real need for Hindi signs in West Bengal? Hindi business people visiting Bangladesh do not insist that they put Hindi signs in post offices, airports and railway stations but they insist that there be Hindi signs everywhere in West Bengal, even in remote village post offices. Hindi signs are foremost the emblems of Hindi rule over all of Indian Union.

I will give one more example. Large numbers of Indian tourists go to Sri Lanka, mostly to southern Sinhala areas. Indian government and private companies also do substantial business in Sri Lanka; the two countries are even discussing a type of free trade agreement to increase business further. So, many Indian business people visit Sri Lankan cities. Do Hindi tourists and business people insist that the Sri Lankan Government put Hindi signs on roads, railway stations and post offices? No. Because Sri Lanka is not under the control of the Indian Government dominated by Hindi-belt politicians.

5. Hindi Signs are the most Visible Symbols of Hindi Imposition on Tamil People

Hindi signs are the most visible symbols of the more serious and discriminatory Hindi imposition practices by the Indian Government over the Tamil and other non-Hindi peoples. By opposing the placement of Hindi signs, we are opposing the whole system of Hindi imposition.

Hindi signs are like a small odd shaped mole growing on your back. It does not hurt. But it might be the visible symptom of skin cancer. Unless it is removed and treated, the cancer could spread, cause suffering and kill you. Hindi signs are like a lump in a woman's breast. It does not hurt but if it is not removed and treated, it would grow and cause great suffering and kill you.

Hindi signs painted along national highways, railway stations, post offices and central government offices in Tamil Nadu are the **most visible symptoms** of the deep-rooted, systematic Hindi imposition that is slowly but steadily hurting the Tamil people. Most Tamil people do not know how Hindi is forcibly pushed down the throat of many hard working Tamil people day after day on non-Hindi Indian government employees [Volume 5: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5]. Many Tamil people do not know how making Hindi the official language of India has reduced job opportunities for Tamil people in the Indian Government [Volume 5: Chapters 13, 15]. Good Tamil students lose out to Hindi-belt students of lower caliber in Indian government job examinations because Hindi students could write the examinations in their mother tongue while Tamil students have to write in either Hindi or English. Statistic from Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra where Hindi is a compulsory subject in schools shows that **studying Hindi in schools does not change this situation** because students from these states did not fare any better than Tamil students [Volume 5: Chapter 15; Volume 1: Chapter 2]. However much you study Hindi you cannot compete with Hindi students on equal footing because Hindi is their mother tongue. While most Tamil people do not know of these hidden Hindi-imposition practices and their negative consequences, all Tamil people see the Hindi signs in their daily life. By tarring these signs (as Periyar and Annadurai did in 1952) or loudly opposing these signs (as Chief Minister Jeyalalithaa and PMK leader Ramadoss did in 2004), we are bringing the complete system of Hindi imposition to people's attention. That is the primary reason for opposing Hindi signs. We should tell the people of the hidden and more dangerous Hindi imposition practices too.

Targeting a more visible symbol of oppression, imperialism or domination for protest as symbolic of the opposition to the complete system of oppression is not new. During the American revolution against British rule, American patriots boarded a ship bringing tea to America and through the tea into the sea to protest Britain's discriminatory taxation policies in America. Tea was not the only item taxed. There were more expensive items that were being taxed. But the American patriots chose tea for their symbolic protest because large numbers of American drank tea on a daily basis and were annoyed at the taxes imposed on tea. It is this symbolic protest that started the war of independence that ended with American independence.

Gandhi's "salt protest" during India's independence movement to end British rule was also a symbolic protest. Salt was chosen because everyone uses salt every day. Purpose of that protest was not just to end the taxes on salt. The salt protest was a symbolic act of defiance of British rule and part of the overall independence struggle.

Our opposition to Hindi signs is also symbolic and it reflects our opposition to all forms of Hindi imposition and Hindi hegemony over Tamil Nadu.

"Making a language (Hindi) that is the mother tongue of a region of India the official language for all the people of India is tyranny. We believe that it will give benefits and superiority to one region (the Hindi-speaking region).... Danger to the people of Tamil Nadu because of Hindi becoming the official language of India is great." - Former Tamilnadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai, at his trial for conspiracy to burn the Indian Constitution (December 3, 1963).

6. UPDATE (December 2017): Opposition in Karnataka

Tamil Nadu has been protesting against Hindi signs for decades. Now some other non-Hindi states are also opposing Hindi sign. We have seen Hindi milestones defaced in Karnataka State in 2017. That year also saw protests against Hindi signs at Bengaluru Metro (Namma Metro) in Karnataka. As protests mounted, metro authorities removed Hindi signs [Volume 10: Chapter 5].

(First Published: March 2005; Updated: December 2017)

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POSTSCRIPT

Chapters 7 and 8 of this book discuss the hypocrisy of some top North Indian politicians praising Tamil and then engage in imposing Hindi and promoting Sanskrit. After the initial publication of this book in 2019, we came across a new mini-book in Tamil on the hypocrisy of BJP leader and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress Party' Rahul Gandhi in 2023. Reader who can read Tamil may be interested in that book.

பாரதீய சனதா கட்சியும் தமிழும்: நரேந்திர மோடியின் திடீர் தமிழ்ப் பாசம் - பத்மா நாராயணசாமி

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